

FOREWORD

Democracy cannot be said to truly exist when it is built on the foundation of discrimination and exclusion. Democracy is more than just civilian rule. Burma's democratic deficit is the lack of representation of all people. Reinstalling the NLD government and recognizing the November 8th, 2020 election are important, however it does not address the underlying non-democratic and fundamental problems facing Burma as eloquently written in this Paper titled: ***Burma's challenges Democracy, Human Rights and Narcotics.***

Democratic representation cannot ignore or violate the basic civil and political rights of the marginalized groups, particularly the Rohingya group. In the 2020 election, the Rohingya group and other ethnic groups of Rakhine, Chin, Shan, Kachin could not exercise their basic civic rights to cast their votes with the security reasons imposed by the Union Election Commission. This is a key issue that is in danger of being forgotten by most Western Burma experts or news agencies reporting on Burma. Thankfully this Paper highlights the subversion of the democratic process that further ostracized the already marginalized groups. Any democratic government that claims legitimacy needs to also rectify the discriminatory provisions in the citizenship laws as astutely pointed out within one of the Next Steps / Recommendations of this Paper.

Neither the National League for Democracy (NLD) nor the Tatmadaw have governed Burma in accordance with democratic standards and principles. The 2020 election, which disenfranchised large groups of the society on the basis of their ethnic identity cannot be called credible or genuinely representative of all the people of Burma. Restoring and strengthening democracy must begin with recognizing the short-comings of the key institutions such as the Union Election Commission (UEC) as called for within this Paper.

Furthermore, to address Burma's deep-rooted undemocratic problems, the efforts of US engagement with the Tatmadaw, its State Administrative Council (SAC) or the Committee representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) need to also recognize a dialogue to include:

- 1) The amendment of the 2008 Constitution or dialogue for a new proposed Constitution to provide equitable representation and uniformity of human rights to include all ethnic and minority groups. The present political turmoil should not set-aside this endeavor.
- 2) Recognizing the citizenship issues of the Rohingya people should be front and center to any conversation of repatriation of the refugees in Bangladesh. If we collectively cannot address the Rohingya issue today after a genocide and a military coup, there will be no hope to protect the grievances of other ethnic communities in Burma in the future.

It is my personal fear that without Constitutional protection for equitable and inclusive democratic representation to include all ethnic and minority groups, the power structures in Burma regardless of political representation at an elected government level, power will continue to be in the hands of the Tatmadaw. Most importantly, as this Paper points to, there is a larger problem of narcotics to address, its implications of power and misery that transcend Burma's borders. To imagine that such nefarious activities can happen in Burma without that implicit approval of the powerful Tatmadaw is wishful thinking. Without targeting all the perpetrators linked to this illicit trade, the Tatmadaw will continue to have the power to pursue their policies of economic self-interest along with continued oppression, marginalization and persecution of minority groups.

It is my hope as you read this Paper you can take some Policy actions to address the challenges that effect Burma, namely *Democracy, Human Rights and Narcotics.*

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Burma's challenges Democracy, Human Rights and Narcotics

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Summary:

With targeted sanctions deployed as consequences to the military coup in Burma, the United States should next aggressively challenge the power structures of the Tatmadaw ^{Glossary [1]}. A well-coordinated diplomatic strategy is now essential to co-opt allies and friends within the Indo-Pacific as decades of an unchecked narcotics related businesses has created powerful structures for a very small minority of beneficiaries whose economic control are now pervasive throughout Burma's economy. Aided by under-the-radar money laundering operations, provides these actors with the financial strength to any external pushbacks.

This Argument/Paper takes on a range of complex issues that straddle, harsh ground realities, accusations of voter fraud, the economic effects of a thriving narcotics trade with all its money laundering implications, interweaving human rights related issues along with preventing Burma from slipping back exclusively into a CCP orbit with National Security implications.

Argument:

The purpose of this Argument is to first acknowledge the harsh ground realities that the United States is faced in dealing with the Burmese military's (Tatmadaw) coup that occurred on February 1st, 2021 and thereafter consider the 'Next Steps' recommendations is presented herein this Paper. To help alter the current trajectory of Tatmadaw's actions the United States must consider the formulation of Policy that challenge the current power structures in Burma.

In the Paper we highlight narcotics as one of the core issues that has challenged Burma's path towards an equitable Constitution with protection for all ethnic communities and Democracy for decades. The Tatmadaw which for decades saw itself fighting against nonstate militias that were central to the opium production trade has now evolved to emerge as one of the prime protectorates of the manufacturers of Amphetamine type stimulants (ATS) in Burma.

Burma is now one of the largest global centers for the production of methamphetamine and opiates. Furthermore, the liquidity of unimaginable amounts of cash created by narco-economics has created a nexus of actors that have aided the Tatmadaw to construct powerful structures that have provide it with the financial strength to withstand any sanctions from the West. We argue herein, that it is only when we can challenge these power structures, can we ensure a higher probability of determining the outcome of Tatmadaw's timeline back to Democracy and also ensuring Burma's future stability as a transitioning Democracy.

A surveillance state future versus leverage created to challenge the Tatmadaw

For the majority of Burmese people, the loss of their transitional democracy have been compounded by a complete role reversal of the prospects of economic and social development. Pushing back hard however is the brave younger generation of Burmese students along with a cross section of members of civil society across Burma. Consequently, a draconian Cyber-Security Law implemented on February 15th, 2021 aided by sophisticated Chinese equipment^[1] and a brutal crackdown by the military junta targeted at the civil disobedience movement (CDM) points towards a surveillance state future for Burma.

Cautious low-key reactions from within the regional ASEAN countries and the sympathetic ideologies of competing powers (like China and Russia) have successfully muted United Nations Security Council discussions for the benefit of the Tatmadaw.

In contrast the strong leadership of President Biden's Executive Order^[2] dated February 11th, 2021 along with subsequent additions to the Perpetrators of the Coup^[3] to the Specially

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Designated Nationals (SDN) and Blocked Persons List, sanctions imposed by The Office of Foreign Assets Control ("OFAC") of the US Department of the Treasury along with the Blocking Property with respect to the situation in Burma^[4] have helped re-establish strong and credible US leadership. These actions have also been followed by subsequent global Magnitsky Designations^[5] to include the *33rd and 77th Light Infantry Division of the Burmese Army* and OFAC's designation^[6] of two military holding companies, *Myanma Economic Holdings Public Company Limited (MEHL)* and *Myanmar Economic Corporation Limited (MEC)* has now helped create critical leverage against the Tatmadaw.

Recognizing that these targeted sanctions will now have a higher probability to extract concessions or change the current trajectory of events unfolding in Burma, the United States must immediately take advantage of the leverage created via a well-coordinated diplomatic strategy especially with allies, partners and friends within the *Indo-Pacific* to aggressively challenge the power structures that enable the Tatmadaw to operate with impunity.

Tatmadaw's vision of Democracy and nuances of disenfranchisement

Despite condemnation of the military coup from Western countries, the Tatmadaw looks at options favorable to their version of Democracy. Observing the formation of the *State Administrative Council (SAC)* and the importance placed in co-opting members of the previous administration and its ongoing efforts to onboard members of civil society are early indicators that the Tatmadaw is charting a course, looking at Thailand's history of military coups and re-engineered constitutions as a potential model that would serve its interests to showcase as their transitional path back to Democracy, albeit on their terms.

To explore the allegations of voter fraud that perpetuated this military coup, is a paradox that is unpleasant to most Western observers. To better comprehend the nuances of disenfranchisement that transpired during the November 08th 2020 election, especially targeted at numerous ethnic communities, please refer to *Appendix A*.

US agencies, other donor countries and multilateral organizations that are likely to be active participants in a future Burma, post military coup, should also consider playing a key role restructuring and strengthening key democratic institution within Burma as we present in one of our 'Next Steps' recommendations. Absent such institutional reforms, would see Burma slip back to an endless cycle of voter disenfranchisement regardless of the government in power.

Issues at hand, engagement versus vested interests

The Tatmadaw's "accusations of voter fraud" as publicly stated^[7] on January 26th, 2021, were perhaps the first ruptures of failed negotiations between the Tatmadaw and the NLD to seek out a compromise. Perhaps this military coup could have been pre-empted and as speculative motives provide, the mainstream hypothesis was that perhaps Senior General Min Aung Hlaing had much too loose and risked protection to his vast family business interests after his mandatory retirement later this year. Regardless the issue at hand now is to look for pragmatic solutions for a peaceful transition back to Democracy in a time sensitive fashion.

Engagement with the Tatmadaw is a double edged sword, that carries multiple risks, however absent any forum for tough and candid discussions and negotiations, the risks of a number of negative outcomes remains high. Without additional new leverage against the Tatmadaw, we see the prospects of continued loss of life targeted at the CDM and other ethnic minorities. The probabilities thereafter of effecting any consequential change by the Tatmadaw for transitioning Burma back to democracy in the near term will remain low.

While the Biden Administration has done an excellent job in diminishing the economic power that rests within the business holdings of the Burmese military, we advocate it would be timely to now aggressively target the power structures that provide the senior leadership of the Tatmadaw with its financial lifeline and the decade long menace of Burma, namely narcotics.

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The power of the senior leadership of the Tatmadaw rests with their nexus of crony businesses that have a combination of rent free and lucrative concessions of extractive and natural resources businesses along with deep vested interests in the ATS trade such as methamphetamine and opiates, the profits of which are deeply intertwined with the real estate and banking sector, both of which serve specific money laundering objectives.

This nexus has created powerful structures for a very small minority of beneficiaries whose economic control are now pervasive throughout Burma's economy. Aided by under-the-radar money laundering operations, this lucrative business has provided the Tatmadaw with the financial strength to withstand any sanctions or external pushbacks.

Without challenging these narcotics enabled power structures, it would be difficult to create the additional necessary leverage need to ensure that the Tatmadaw transitions back towards democracy in a timely manner. Once such leverage has been created there could be the opportunity for dialogue between the SAC and the Committee representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) along with Burma's civil society leaders to include all ethnic parties on the need for amendments to the current Constitution or the complete replacement thereof.

The role of narcotics and Shan State

Largely absent from Burma related discussions is the role of narcotics that has been shaping Burma's power structure for decades. The economic effects of narcotics has however taken on a more visible footprint over the last few years, as the opening of Burma provided new and more efficient avenues of money laundering both within the real estate markets of large cities like Yangon and Mandalay along with usage of an inefficient capacity challenged banking sector to facilitate in the money laundering of an estimated \$40 billion^[8] annually.

Apart from the occasional brilliant reporting and investigative documentaries, the subject of the role of narcotics in the Burmese power structures has remained largely a taboo subject, for Policy makers globally to discuss. Perhaps due to the distance of geography coupled by the complexities of constantly changing dynamics amongst non-state militias in the midst of conflict zones, the role of monitoring the evolving landscape has been relegated to just a handful regional drug enforcement watchers and the occasional brave journalist.

The core narcotic issue at hand is that Shan State in Burma *has recently emerged as one of the largest global centers for the production of methamphetamine and opiates.*

The issue of concern for the United States is that Burmese *methamphetamine and opiates* production which traditionally operated as a nexus of transnational militias (such as the Shan State Army and the Wa State Army) along with other transnational criminal groups that previously targeted Thailand and other South Asian markets (via the distribution of billions of meth based Yaba tablets) have now been increasingly reaching the United States. Aided by porous Shan State borders, regional opiate based synthetic drug businesses then deploy postal carriers as their primary delivery of choice to target consumers in the United States.

Unlike the high profile narcotic cartels of Columbia and Mexico, it has remained almost impossible to pinpoint the owners of the production laboratories in Burma due to the decades long armed conflicts and the constantly changing ownership of territory and natural resources. However, a series of raids conducted between February and April 2020^[9] point to a complex evolution of the transnational crime syndicates and their massive fentanyl production laboratories in northeastern Shan State, an area controlled by the Kaungkha militia (Kachin Defence Army), an ethnic Kachin force that is aligned with the Tatmadaw.

It does not take long to understand that without the implicit blessing of the undisputed power in the region, specific sections of Tatmadaw are complicit in this lucrative nefarious enterprise.

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The investigative question to endure is *"what are the payment mechanism for this implicit tax (of turning a blind eye of facilitating this trade), who are the prime beneficiaries, what means do intermediaries and proxies use to fulfil these money laundering objectives and where does the money ultimately reside and under whose name are these assets or cash held?"*

Next Steps / Recommendations:

The United States within its Burma Policy evaluation must consider taking a wide-angle macro-economic view of the primary beneficiaries of this vibrant nefarious trade in Burma along with all the money laundering intermediaries for all future Policy formulation to create the necessary pressure points to alter the power structures of the Tatmadaw and then engage with other sections within the Tatmadaw and capture its "mindshare aggressively".

The United States must also use this opportunity to highlight and propose solutions to address the long standing genocide against the Rohingya people along with other human right transgressions committed by the Tatmadaw against many other ethnic communities in Burma.

As we target this Paper towards US Policy makers, we herein advocate some of the following Next Steps / Recommendations for your consideration.

1. To alter and challenge the power structures of the Tatmadaw the United States must investigate the senior leadership of the Tatmadaw along with a host of crony businesses as principal beneficiaries of the narcotics trade and bring forth the necessary enforcement tools as provided to the *Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)* and the prosecutorial powers that rest within the *Department of Justice (DOJ)* and pursue the same vigorously.

We strongly advocate the need to appropriate the necessary budgets to enable the DEA and the DOJ to bring this transnational \$40 billion a year nefarious enterprise to justice.

2. The '*Enforcement/Implementation issues and comments*' segment of the Burma section of an "*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report*" published by the *Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), United States Department of State, March, 2020^[10]*, although well intentioned, fails to address core issues related to money laundering.

The current report correctly points to the challenges of capacity within the Banking sector, however fails to describe any "vulnerabilities and deficiencies", one of the main objectives of this Report. *We additionally wish to cite at least one deficiency to be considered for deeper investigation by the INL, 'the role of the 'casino sector' regionally. Casinos located along the Mekong River in addition to the booming town of Sihanoukville (Cambodia) deserve attention.*

We therefore recommend that domain knowledge experts particularly from the *DEA* and the US Department of Treasury (Treasury) that have significant experience in dealing with narcotics and money laundering issues in Latin American be assembled to assist INL and co-author a new exclusive '*Burma Narcotics and Money Laundering*' (BNML) report.

Furthermore, we also recommended that this new BNML report apply some of the insights of the Panama Papers^[11] to explore possible escribes key vulnerabilities and deficiencies for money laundering that exist within Burma's *border trade* with the Kingdom of Thailand (to include its digitally enabled Hawala networks that co-opt one of the world's largest migrant population remittances outbound from Thailand to Burma) along with Burma's *inter-banking, payments settlements mechanisms* that occurred in the past with the Republic of Singapore.

In creating a road map for prosecutorial action, the US will also have the intended benefit of potentially impounding billions of dollars for the benefit of a future democratically elected Burmese government and also serve as restitution for the millions of individuals in the US who have been directly impacted and devastated by the horrors of addiction to *methamphetamine and opiates and the resulting overdose deaths from fentanyl.*

3. Engaging with the governments of Singapore and Thailand, to seek their support for 'jurisdiction' to investigate suspicious banking accounts that could also help in the extraction of proxies that are concealing the true owners of monies laundered from Burma. These actions would help create powerful leverage against the Tatmadaw.

Additionally, in working with the leadership of the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) and the Bank of Thailand (BOT) could also provide valuable insights into the vulnerabilities of ever evolving modes of the transfer of money from Burma using both formal and informal channels.

Efforts should also be undertaken to set up a 'multi-jurisdictional' Joint Task Force to include MAS and BOT to explore the transfer of monies from non-domiciled accounts residing in Singapore and Thailand into Bitcoin and other cryptocurrency assets.

4. As a champion of human rights, the United States has taken the correct course of action in its *Global Magnitsky Designations* by adding to OFAC's SDN list the *33rd and 77th Light Infantry Division of the Burmese Army* that were directly responsible for the horrific events that forced 700,000 Rohingya people to flee Burma^[12].

Next, the United States should also provide a leadership role in proposing repatriation solutions for the Rohingya refugees currently in Bangladesh and by calling for the immediate abolishment of all Rohingya centric internment camps in Burma along with the annulment of the provisions of the 1982 law that perpetuates the citizenship crisis for all Rohingya people.

Without having to worry of upending a nascent democracy or appeasing Aung San Su Kyi and her past apologist approach in favor of the Tatmadaw's actions against the Rohingya people, the United States must make its voice heard to the majority Burman population in Burma.

Ultimately it depends on Burmese society on how to offer truth and reconciliation to the Rohingya people who have suffered for generations at the hands of the Tatmadaw. The United States however can make its voice heard by advocating for constitutional passage of full citizenship rights for the Rohingya people along with the abolishment of all internment camps in Burma as a necessary pre-condition for any future donor related activities in Burma.

5. To prevent further bloodshed on the streets and from events spinning out of control into a civil war the United States should consider the creation of some mechanisms for 'dialogue and shared interest' between the CRPH and the SAC. The timetable for such a dialogue will most logically depend on the facts on the ground and if necessary leverage has been created.

6. An *area of dialogue for 'shared interest'* to the transition back to democracy could be to negotiate enacting the *UEC as an autonomous constitutional authority*.

The United States could help such a dialogue by offering the UEC resources such as piloting training programs to be held in consultation with the Office of Inspection General, Federal Election Commission, all with the goal of ensuring the integrity of future Burmese elections.

7. As the Burmese people, to include all ethnic communities across Burma have been united in their Civil Disobedience movement against this military coup, it has become apparent they are largely unified towards the need for a new Constitution that establishes a federal democratic republic form of government with strong protection for human rights at its core.

As a champion of Democracy, the United States can offer mechanisms, programs and resources by which Constitutional Scholars from any number of US Universities of academic excellence are able to assist in key knowledge transfer in an advisory capacity to any credible grouping of Burmese lawyers, scholars and human right activists in Burma or in hiding that are dedicated to the cause of drafting an all-inclusive Constitution that protects all its people.

National Security Considerations:

The National Security issue consideration for the United States is China's strategic access to the Bay of Bengal via the potential development of naval and aircraft carrier enabled port facilities in Kyaukpyu, Rakhine and unfettered access to the Indian Ocean. Any such development would create significant vulnerabilities in the Indo-Pacific strategy that will prove costly for the US and its friends and allies in this 21st Century.

Altering the power structure dynamics will also enable the United States to aggressively engage with the Tatmadaw. The Tatmadaw which is supposedly not a fan of the CCP, however if left with no other engagement options, they will accede to China's geo-strategic interests.

Conclusions:

To help alter the current trajectory of the military coup in Burma, with the objective to help create a road map for a transition back to democracy, the United States must apply maximum legal pressure including prosecutorial action targeted towards factions within the Tatmadaw and their intermediaries that benefit from a thriving narcotics businesses. Vulnerabilities and deficiencies as it relates to money laundering must be examined in working diplomatically with our partners and friends in ASEAN.

Furthermore, as a champion of human rights, the United States must also advocate to the Burmese people, that democracy cannot be selective to a majority population and blind to ethnic minorities and thereby must negotiate for the return of all Rohingya people, the passage of their citizenship and the abolishment of all internment camps in Burma.

United States national security considerations notwithstanding, creating "shared interests" with the SAC and helping Burmese stakeholders in drafting a new Constitution should also be considered as a means to help transitioning Burma back to democracy.

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Name and Usage: This Paper refers to "**Myanmar**" ^{Glossary [2]} as "**Burma**", throughout this Paper.

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Appendix A

The buildup to November 8th, 2020 elections & observations

The esteemed *Foreign Policy*, published an argument titled^[A1] "Myanmar's Election Won't be Free or Fair" which stated "The NLD's intolerance for dissent sends a threatening message that it is the sole guardian of democracy, and that anyone who opposes the NLD must therefore oppose democracy. In the face of these restrictions on free expression, Western countries have generally remained silent." and goes on to express a much recognized thought to most Burma observers "Perhaps many Western countries are holding their tongues because the military still poses a greater threat to Myanmar's democratic transition." and presciently affirms, "While the NLD's victory is a forgone conclusion, democracy is as much about the process as it is about the result and the NLD has so far shown little respect for that process"

While most diplomatic missions in Burma along with global mainstream media cite a largely free and fair election, *The Carter Center* however in its Preliminary Statement Nov 10th, 2020^[A2], cites "Ongoing conflict in many areas of country and the exclusion of more than two million people from the electoral process because of violence or discrimination further undermine the democratic character of the election process."

The *Carter Center's Executive Summary* directs attention to the 'Legal framework' wherein "discriminatory provisions on citizenship continue to disenfranchise members of some ethnic minorities, particularly hundreds of thousands of Rohingya who lost the right to vote to prior to the 2015 elections." The 'Election Administration' section further mentions "The UEC decisions on cancellations and postponements, which disenfranchised some 1.4 million voters and will leave 22 seats in the national parliament vacant, were not supported by transparent criteria set out in advance" and more importantly goes on to state "The administration of advance voting raised a number of concerns. Management of advance out-of-constituency voting lacked safeguards to ensure the secrecy and integrity of the vote."

Explicit implications of altering the election results are cited within the 'Candidate registration' section, stating "In addition, over 15 percent of candidate were deregistered well into the campaign period (the majority because of the deregistration of one political party). This not only affected the right of individuals to stand for office but also prevented political parties from replacing candidates. Finally, collection and publication of data on candidates' ethnicities and religions does not appear to comply with the constitutional right to privacy and international data protection principles."

A domestic independent election observer group called the *People's Alliance for Credible Elections (PACE)*, which said in a carefully worded statement^[A3] "Besides the shortcomings in the electoral legal framework, observers also found some inconsistencies in election administration and weaknesses in implementation during the COVID-19 pandemic situation. However, the domestic election observer groups found that the results of the elections were credible and reflected the will of the majority voters."

The independent findings by *The Carter Center* and *PACE* should therefore set aside any romantic notions that Burma was transitioning smoothly into a democracy with a free and fair election. Travel related restrictions imposed by the Covid19 global pandemic provided strong incentives to change the election environment and thus the results in certain constituencies and regions but not necessarily the final outcome of the elections. The orchestration of the disenfranchisement of voters and ethnic party participation in Rakhine & Shan State with surgical precision by the *National League of Democracy (NLD)* as implicitly alleged in these findings is difficult to imagine without close coordination of State Counsellor Aung San Su Kyi and key officers at the *Union Election Commission (UEC)*.

On subjects closely related to disenfranchisement, we are also reminded Aung San Su Kyi's defense of the genocide committed against the Rohingya people at The Hague and her

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repeated resistance to any independent inquiry for crimes committed by factions of the military during her tenure as *State Counsellor*, along with her lack of any support for the dissolution of the internment camps of the Rohingya people. We therefore, throw caution to the wind on the narrative that Aung San Su Kyi is the sole representative of the democratic aspirations of all people in Burma and that the November 08th, 2020 election was free and fair as being now equated too, as a consequence of this military coup.

Complex as the November 08th 2020 elections were, we view the events of February 01st, 2021 as a cold calculated pre-emptive power move by the Tatmadaw.

To justify its position as protector of numerous election inconsistencies, the Tatmadaw has once again succeeded to further disenfranchise the majority of Burmese people who voted for the NLD. Despite the transgressions that occurred during the events leading up to and during the November 08th 2020 Elections, the will of the majority of the people must prevail and the NLD and its leader Aung San Su Kyi must be reinstated.

Authors statement on the November 2020 elections and the February 2021 military coup:

~ We strongly condemn the military coup on February 01st, 2021 and call upon the Tatmadaw for the immediate release of all detainees.

~ We call for the Tatmadaw to immediately, reinstate the NLD as the elected government despite the imperfections of the elective process and to respect the will of the voters.

~ We call upon all stakeholders to ensure that new elections are afforded to all regions and communities that were systematically bypassed and affected on Nov 08th, 2020.

~ We call upon all stakeholders to consider that the UEC be reconstituted as an autonomous constitutional authority with meritocracy based appointments for all its governing officers.

Appendix A, Notations:

^{A1} [Myanmar's Elections Won't be Free or Fair](#), Andrew Nagemson, *Foreign Policy*, October 27th, 2020

^{A2} [Preliminary Statement, Nov. 10, Election Observation Mission, Myanmar General Election, November 8, 2020](#), The Carter Center, November 10th, 2020

^{A3} [Joint Statement by Domestic Election Observer Organizations](#), *People's Alliance for Credible Elections*, January 29th, 2021

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Glossary:

¹ **Tatmadaw** is the official name of the armed forces of Myanmar (Burma). Administered by the Ministry of Defence it is composed of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force. Auxiliary services include the Myanmar Police Force, the People's Militia Units and until 2013 the Frontier Forces, known as Na Sa Kha.

² **Myanmar** is an endonym for the region and a derivative from the local short-form name Myanma Naingngandaw, used as early as the 11th century, however its etymology remains controversial.

On 4 January 1948, the nation became an independent republic, under the terms of the Burma Independence Act 1947. The new country was named the "Union of Burma". The official English name was changed to the "Union of Myanmar" in 1989, and later to the "Republic of the Union of Myanmar".

Etymology: Burmese (*mranma*), the formal name of the main ethnic group in Myanmar; (*ba.ma*), from which the name Burma is derived. Both Burmese terms are also adjectives meaning "Burmese" (related to Myanmar/Burma, its, people, language, etc.). When certain words are attached, the combination may mean specifically Myanmar (Burma) (country) or Burmese (person, language, etc.) - a noun.

Glossary source credit: Wikipedia & Wikitionary

Notations:

¹ [Burmese Expert: China Helping Military Establish Cyber Firewall](#), VOA Mandarin, VOA Burmese Service, February 12th, 2021

² [Executive Order on Blocking Property with Respect to the Situation in Burma](#), The White House, February 11th, 2021.

³ [United States Targets Leaders of Burma's Military Coup Under New Executive Order](#), U.S. Department of the Treasury, February 11th, 2021

⁴ [Issuance of Executive Order "Blocking Property With Respect To The Situation In Burma;" Burma-related Designations and Designations Updates](#), U.S. Department of the Treasury, February 11th, 2021

⁵ [Global Magnitsky Designations and Designation Updates, Burma-related Designations](#), U.S. Department of the Treasury, March 22nd, 2021

⁶ [Treasury Sanctions Military Holding Companies in Burma](#), U.S. Department of the Treasury, March 25th, 2021

⁷ [Military raises spectre of coup over Myanmar election turmoil](#), Myanmar Times, 26th, January, 2021

⁸ [Fire and Ice: Conflict and Drugs in Myanmar's Shan State](#), Report No 299, International Crisis Group, 8th, January, 2019

⁹ [Raids Reveal Massive Fentanyl Production in Myanmar](#), Hannah Beech and Saw Nang, The New York Times, May 19th, 2020

¹⁰ [International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, Volume 11, Money Laundering](#). (Burma Section, Page 72), Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, United States Department of State, March, 2020

¹¹ [The Panama Papers: Exposing the Rogue Offshore Finance Industry](#), International Consortium of Investigative Journalists

¹² [Tip of the Spear, The shock troops who expelled the Rohingya from Myanmar](#), A Reuters Investigation by Simon Lewis, Zeba Siddiqui, Clare Baldwin and Andrew R.C. Marshall, June 26th, 2018